

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOGADI 02018 301231Z
ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 2018

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SO
SUBJ: RECENT PARTY AND GOVERNMENT CHANGES

REF: MOGADISCIO 1928

1. SIGNIFICANCE OF PARTY AND GOVERNMENT CHANGES: WHILE NOT INDICATIVE OF ANY MAJOR CHANGES IN THE STRUCTURE OR MAKE-UP OF THE GSDR, OR OF ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN SIAD'S POSITION OR ABILITY TO RULE, THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT RE-SHUFFLE ANNOUNCED AUGUST 18 (REPORTED REFTTEL) DOES SHED SOME LIGHT ON THE CURRENT STATE OF DOMESTIC POLITICS. SIAD CONTINUES TO FIND PERIODIC CHANGES IN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT POSITIONS USEFUL. THEY ENABLE HIM TO MAINTAIN A BALANCE -- AT TIMES DELICATE -- BETWEEN TRIBE AND CLAN GROUPS, AND BETWEEN PERSONALITIES. THEY ALSO MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR INDIVIDUALS TO BUILD UP PERSONAL CONSTITUENCIES, AND SERVE TO REMIND HIS APPOINTEES AND OTHERS THAT HE REMAINS IN CHARGE AND THAT POSITIONS CAN BE GIVEN AND TAKEN AWAY AT WILL.

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PAGE 02 MOGADI 02018 301231Z

2. STRAINS IN SIAD'S POWER BASE: THE MOST IMPORTANT INFERENCE WE DRAW FROM THIS LATEST SET OF CHANGES IS THAT RECENT RUMORS -- FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES -- OF STRAINS IN THE MAREHAN-DOLBAHANTE ALLIANCE ON WHICH SIAD'S POSITION IS BASED ARE NOT WITHOUT SUBSTANCE. CLEARLY SIAD IS RELYING MORE ON HIS FELLOW MAREHAN TRIBESMEN, AND IS TRUSTING THOSE OF OTHER TRIBES, INCLUDING

DOLBAHANTE, LESS. THIS IS NOT SURPRISING IN A SOCIETY THAT HAS BEEN UNDER SEVERE STRAINS IN RECENT MONTHS. INCREASED INTER-TRIBAL RIVALRIES AND ENLARGED CONSCIOUSNESS OF TRIBAL AND CLAN LOYALTIES WERE INEVITABLE AFTER THE END OF NATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE OGADEN WAR EFFORT. TRIBAL INTERESTS, SUBORDINATED FOR THE SAKE OF NATIONAL SOLIDARITY HAVE BEEN REASSERTING THEMSELVES AND ARE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT IN SOMALI POLITICS. NONETHELESS, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT SOMALI NATIONALISM WILL FOUNDER, OR THAT THERE WILL BE ALL-OUT RIVALRY BETWEEN TRIBES. FEW SOMALIS, WE THINK, WISH TO SEE A RETURN TO AN ENTIRELY TRIBAL-BASED POLITICAL SITUATION, OR A REPETITION OF THE KIND OF ETHNIC POLITICS OF THE 1960'S. THEIR ACTIONS, HOWEVER, MAY CARRY THEM FARTHER ALONG THIS PATH THAN MOST WISH.

3. BIDS FOR OTHER SUPPORT: DESPITE THE FAVORITISM SHOWN TO MEMBERS OF HIS OWN TRIBE, AND THE LESSENING TRUST IN THOSE OF OTHER TRIBES, THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING AS WIDE A BASE OF SUPPORT AS POSSIBLE HAS NOT BEEN LOST ON SIAD. RECENTLY HE HAS BEEN MAKING EXCEPTIONAL EFFORTS TO ENLIST THE SUPPORT OF THE ISSAQ TRIBES IN THE NORTH, AND OF THE HAWIYA TRIBES, AND HAS BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO OFFEND THEM. IN THIS LATEST SET OF APPOINTMENTS BOTH MEMBERS OF THE ISSAQ (AHMED MOHAMED MOHAMOUD, AHMED MOHAMED FARAH) AND HAWIYA TRIBES (OSMAN MOHAMED JELLE),
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PAGE 03 MOGADI 02018 301231Z

FIGURE PROMINENTLY.

4. CREATION OF PARALLEL SECURITY FORCE: THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE APPOINTMENTS MADE ON AUGUST 16 WAS THAT OF ABDULKADIR HAJI MOHAMED TO THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE PARTY INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE. IN WHAT WAS, PERHAPS, AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERPLAY ITS IMPORTANCE, THE SONNA BULLETIN DID NOT CARRY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS APPOINTMENT, BUT SAID ONLY THAT THE INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE IS ASSUMING THE DUTIES OF THE PARTY BUREAU OF DEFENCE AND SECURITY. ABDULKADIR, LIKE SIAD, IS A MAREHAN AND IS A BROTHER OF THE FIRST VICE-MINISTER FOR DEFENCE OMAR HAJI MOHAMED. HIS APPOINTMENT LENDS ADDED CREDENCE TO RUMORS THAT SIAD NO LONGER HAS COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN THE DOLBAHANTE-CONTROLLED NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE (NSS) AND HAS DECIDED TO STRENGTHEN HIS ALL-MAREHAN PARALLAL APPARATUS TO ASSURE HIS SECURITY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ABDULKADIR IS TO REPORT DIRECTLY TO SIAD. THE FORMER PARTY CHAIRMAN FOR DEFENCE AND SECURITY, HAMSA MOHAMED ABDI "GADAWAYNE", A DOLBAHANTE AND FORMER MEMBER OF THE NSS, IS BEING SENT TO THE PROVINCES AS CENTRAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE IN THE GEDO REGION.

5. CAUTIOUS SHORING-UP: SIAD IS CLEARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HIS REGIME, AND IS TAKING CAUTIOUS STEPS TO SHORE IT UP. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE A NUMBER OF OTHER GOVERNMENT AND PARTY CHANGES. MEANWHILE, DIRECTORS GENERAL OF MINISTRIES REMAIN AT THE ORIENTATION CAMP AT HALANE, AND THE TRIAL OF A THIRD GROUP OF THOSE IMPLICATED IN THE APRIL COUP ATTEMPT HAS JUST STARTED.
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